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primarily concerned with the details of the industrial life of the community; and he would require that, before a strike or lockout occurs in which more than ten persons are involved, the questions in dispute must be brought before certain officers of the *Localarbeitskammern* sitting as an *Einigungskommission*. The negotiation would be compulsory; but upon a failure of the parties to agree, the strike may be proceeded with. This plan would at least compel a degree of "publicity" not now possible in Germany or in our own country; but it has been contended that such a law would be a prolific breeder of strikes. The natural tendency of conciliation boards is to suggest a compromise—to split the difference. Workmen likely to get the approval of a board, and the supposed consequent public sympathy, for a demand for something more than they are getting, have constantly before them, it is said, a temptation to threaten a strike.

These local boards have the most important functions to perform that belong to Dr. Harms' scheme. But above them he would have district boards (*Bezirksarbeitskammern*), composed of representatives chosen by the local boards, whose duty it would be to work over the statistical material collected by the local boards, keep in touch with their needs and demands, and serve as a medium of communication with the imperial labor office (*Reichsarbeitsamt*), which he would place at the head of the whole organization.

How far the scheme proposed would go toward bridging over the "social and economic chasm" which now separates the producing classes, it is difficult to say; but in a country where legal compulsion may be used to bring antagonists, too often well-nigh strangers, into active co-operation in dealing with varied problems of community welfare, it does not seem improbable that a better understanding might be reached in matters of employment. It is at least possible that employers should after a time ask themselves the questions put by the author: Why not take into partial confidence at least the men who ought to know something reliable about current industrial conditions? Why leave all instruction on such matters to the political agitators?

G. O. VIRTUE.

WINONA, MINN.

Trade Unionism and British Industry. By EDWIN A. PRATT.
London: John Murray, 1904. 8vo, pp. vii + 244.

The republication at this time of the articles which Mr. Pratt contributed to the *London Times* in the fall of 1901 under the title

of *The Crisis in British Industry* is justified by their seemingly intimate bearing upon the fiscal controversy. In his study of the industrial situation and in his conversations with English manufacturers in 1901, only rarely did Mr. Pratt find the subject of protection referred to as a means of averting the crisis that threatened British industry—in fact, “the general impression seemed to be that if British manufacturers were not so hampered by labor conditions, they would, as a rule—though exceptions were fully admitted—be able to hold their own in spite of foreign competition” (p. 8). In short Mr. Pratt thinks that the conditions which he has shown to exist prove beyond question that it is labor reform and not tariff reform that is needed to bring the desired relief to British industries and British trade.

The book, taken as a whole, is a severe indictment of what is called the “new unionism”—the militant unionism—which is, the author thinks, the most potent force for evil in the English industrial world of today. It is this unionism that he finds guilty of encouraging “the whole range of ‘go-easy’ fallacies”—the restriction of output, the opposition to labor-saving machinery, the excessive shortening of hours, the unreasonable regulations as to the taking on and discharge of men, the limitation of apprentices, and devices for the artificial control of the labor supply in certain trades. These features of trade-union policy, it is pointed out, have resulted, and must necessarily result, in an increased cost of production which means either a higher price to the long-suffering consumer or the transfer of the trade to foreign countries. It is interesting to note in this connection that Mr. Pratt finds it a redeeming feature in the situation “that English people, with their conservative English instincts, are still sufficiently patriotic to pay even a little more for an English-made article, provided the difference in price is not too great” (p. 110)!

The trade-union situation in twenty of the leading British industries is discussed in detail, and in almost every case the unions are held responsible for a depressing outlook. A failure on their part to realize the importance of such a factor as foreign competition has led to increasing use of Belgium plate glass, German bottles, Swedish doors and window sashes, American saws, edge tools from France, and other products formerly supplied to the English market by English factories.

It is trade-unionism in practice rather than trade-unionism in

theory that Mr. Pratt condemns. That the unions might, if conducted along proper lines, be useful to the employer as well as the employee he does not deny. The practices he holds up for censure are in no wise an essential part of trade-union function. The objectionable rules are features of "trade-union law understood rather than written," and of the "ca-nanny" or "go-easy" principle, he says, "The more prominent leaders would of course disavow the principle, but though they may not encourage it openly, they do so tacitly, and their subordinates, 'shop delegates,' and others, do so directly" (p. 27).

The fundamental assumption underlying Mr. Pratt's whole discussion is that the trade-union demands for shorter hours and higher wages have not been accompanied, when granted, by any increased efficiency on the part of the laborers themselves. While theoretically it may be claimed that an increased leisure and an improvement in the standard of life will make the laborer more efficient and lower the cost of production, practically, according to Mr. Pratt, it has worked out very differently and in some cases (p. 73), the increased leisure has been devoted to plastering, gardening, shoemaking, and other employments.

On the whole, the reader of Mr. Pratt's book cannot fail to be impressed with the fact that he is hearing only one side of the story. Hostility to trade-unionism is written large on every page from cover to cover, and the author's very evident bias makes one question rather than accept his conclusions. That the average trade-unionist still clings to the "lump of labor" fallacy and feels the necessity of "making the work go round," and the virtue of "leaving something for the unemployed," is generally admitted and deplored even by his friends, but that trade-unionism is responsible for all of the ills that have befallen British trade and industry is not so clear. Nor is it clear either that the "new unionism" which Mr. Pratt finds in England is a "militant" unionism of "truculent tactics" whose policy is controlled largely by the socialists, the unemployed, the ne'er-dowells, and the indolent workers (pp. 145, 206). The question might also be raised whether the trade-union world has not moved in the three years since the writing of these articles, and whether it has not been moving in England, as it has in this country, toward the substitution of what have been called the new industrial unions for the old trade unions, so that a great industry whose employees formerly belonged to twenty or thirty different unions will no longer be a house

divided against itself. If this tendency has been observed in England to anything like the same extent as in this country, the difficult situation pictured by Mr. Pratt (pp. 177-79) as the result of trade-union family quarrels may be more imaginary than real.

As a call to trade-unionists to put their house in order, Mr. Pratt's strictures might serve a very useful purpose, but as a criticism of trade-union policy and practice his conclusions must be accepted as the *ex parte* judgments of a biased observer. The book is interesting and informational, but the reader must take the facts at his own valuation, rather than accept the author's interpretation of them. For the impression grows upon one as he reads that the investigation was not a colorless seeking after truth, but an attempt to find facts which would bear out a theory already formed, and that the trade-unionist was really judged without notice and without a hearing.

EDITH ABBOTT.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

The Second General Report and The Twentieth Annual Report of the New York Department of Labor. By JOHN McMACKIN, Commissioner. Albany: The Argus Co., 1904. 2 vols., 8vo, pp. viii + 1172 and 877.

This second report of the New York Department of Labor, which was created under an act of 1901 by the consolidation of several independent departments having to do with industrial conditions, contains some justification for the consolidation on the ground of economy of administration. The number of employees in the various bureaus under the present arrangement has been reduced one-fourth, and a corresponding reduction has been made in expenditures. The fifty-page review of the work of the bureaus for the year is another obvious gain. The binding together of the independent reports of the commissioner, the Free Employment Bureau, the Bureau of Factory Inspection, and that of the Bureau of Mediation and Arbitration, in a single volume, is a doubtful gain.

The Free Employment Bureau in its seventh year had 5,903 applications for work and 4,106 applications for help, and it secured positions for 3,662 persons. It has not displaced the private "employment agencies" nor eliminated their vicious practices. The report is pervaded by a tone of hopefulness for the bureau's increased future service.